FN82 Turret update October – November 20

September finished with a plan to clean and inspect more components and then apply paint to the main structure.

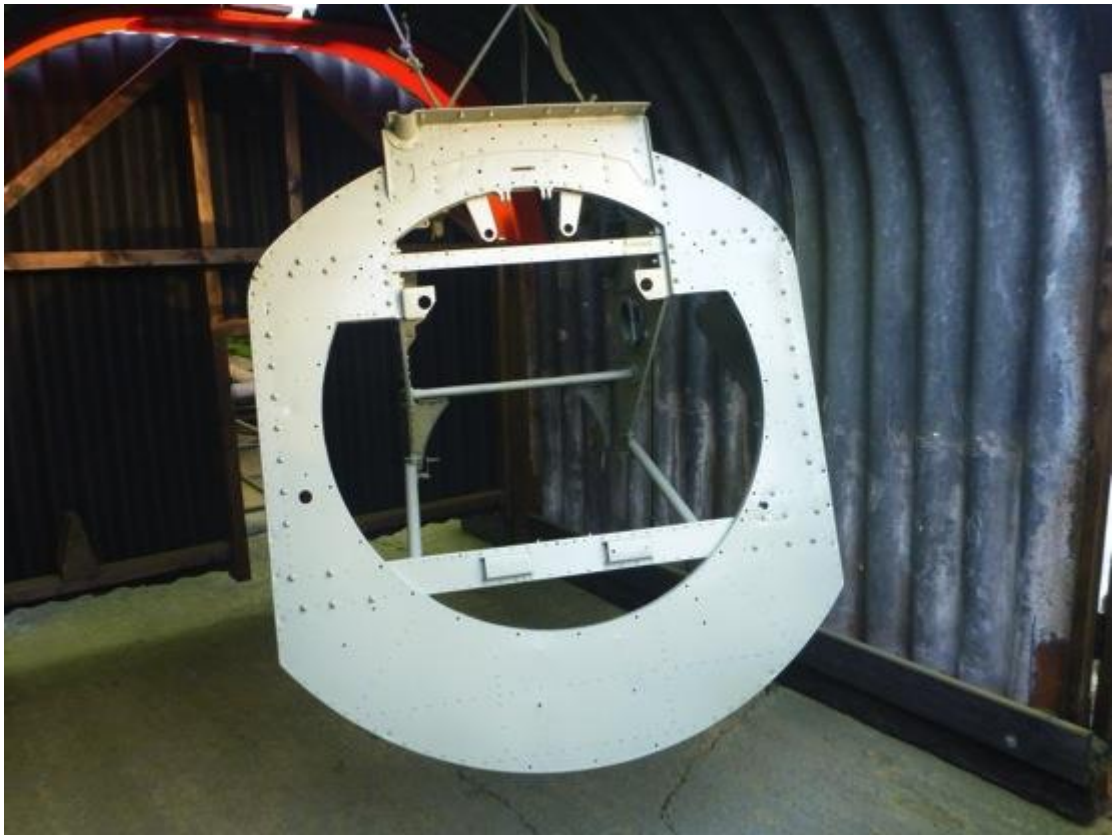
Before the cold set in, it seemed wise to get on with the painting. The turret requires a non-chromate wash, followed by an etch primer and then a finish of 20% gloss black. To best do this I acquired an Apollo 1500-3 HVLP spray rig and then moved the subject components into the Anderson shelter.

Spraying in an Anderson shelter requires good RPE because of the lack of air space, however, it does allow spraying to continue during air raids.

With the non chromate wash applied, above, the etch primer could then be applied. This gives a very smooth, pleasing finish as seen below.

The superstructure (accommodation floor and side frames) was then moved back into the main workshop and allowed to harden off.

Although it would be possible to continue building assemblies into this structure, it would make re-fitting the turret rings much more difficult. Therefore, this assembly has now been progressed as far as is possible for the time being. The next stage will be to fit the rotating and non-rotating turret rings once they become available.



The next stage was to start working towards re-building the cupola. As mentioned in the September issue, this was to be built on a reproduction accommodation plate. The plate was improved by cutting the central hole and transferring across the

myriad of bolt holes that are required. Also, a reproduction cross member was built and fitted.

By this point, it was possible to start fitting the cupola components. First, the cupola rear half was bolted in place to add support for the front half. This will have to come off again for restoration as it is not yet fully stripped out.

The cupola front half components were then stripped back to substrate and any minor repairs carried out. At this point any missing or faulty anchor nuts could be replaced. The components were then treated to the same paint regime as the superstructure and could then be built onto the accommodation plate.

The next stage for the cupola front half is to fit the four main arches that form the main shape of the turret. These are currently away for re-manufacture, but there is still plenty to be getting on with.

The fixtures and fittings had to be started somewhere and so I chose the very tired looking roller draught excluders. Seen below is the selection of four examples that I had available for the job. The two on the left are the originals and the other parts are from the second FN82. Luckily, amongst the other parts are some unused components that can be quickly swapped across.

That said, the actual roller assemblies have suffered some very serious corrosion and the end plates on most of them are beyond recovery. The only way to strip out these components was to carefully drill out all of the fasteners and so there will be a lot of searching about for AGS parts before the rebuild.


BOSCH

With the roller draught excluders fully dismantled and awaiting the re-manufactured end caps, attention turned to the control system. This revealed fewer horrors and was mainly a matter of carefully removing the many layers of old paint. Seen below is a collection of parts waiting for the next painting session

December will see further stripping out and cleaning of components in preparation for painting and re-fitting once the turret rings have been fitted. With luck the weather will have warmed up a bit!